

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00

L-03 FRB-03 OMB-01 TAR-01 SP-02 AGR-05 AID-05 CIAE-00

COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 OIC-02 SIL-01 STR-04

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON UNCTAD

SUBJECT: UNCTAD COMMITTEE ON COMMODITIES: CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENTS

REF: GENEVA 9256

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. COMMITTEE ON COMMODITIES (CC)
ENDED EVENING OF DECEMBER 19 WITH A SHORT PROCEDURAL
RESOLUTION AGREEING THAT STUDIES HAVE REACHED A STAGE
AT WHICH CONCRETE DECISIONS ARE POSSIBLE AND RECOMMENDING
THAT MARCH TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD (TDB) MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION BY UNCTAD IV ON AN INTEGRATED
PROGRAM (IP). NO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS OR RECOM-
MENDATIONS WERE INCLUDED IN RESOLUTIONS, NOR WILL THERE
BE A CHAIRMAN'S REPORT OR AGREED CONCLUSIONS. IN CLOSING
PLENARY SESSION G-77 CRITICIZED GROUP B FOR NOT ENGAGING
IN SERIOUS DISCUSSION WITH THEM ON IP. GROUP B
CHAIRMAN IN FINAL STATEMENT AVOIDED DIRECT RESPONSE
BUT SAID GROUP B WAS READY TO MOVE FORWARD ON THE QUOTE
COMPLICATED WORK ON COMMODITY ISSUES WHICH STILL NEEDED
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TO BE DONE PRIOR TO UNCTAD IV. UNQUOTE. END SUMMARY.

2. AT BRIEF DECEMBER 18 CONTACT GROUP MEETING, CHAIRMAN CHADHA OFFERED A DRAFT OF QUOTE AGREED CONCLUSIONS UNQUOTE FOR CONSIDERATION. GROUP B DECIDED TEXT WAS SO BIASED IN FAVOR OF G-77 POSITION THAT NO NEGOTIATIONS ON BASIS OF THIS TEXT WERE POSSIBLE. LATER IN DAY, A DRAFT RESOLUTION WAS ALSO SUBMITTED BY THE CHAIRMAN. AT LATE EVENING MEETING OF GROUP COORDINATORS, AGREEMENT WAS REACHED WITHDRAWING CHAIRMAN'S DRAFT OF AGREED CONCLUSIONS AND SUBSTITUTING A NEW, NON-SUBSTANTIVE DRAFT RESOLUTION INCLUDING GROUP B AMENDMENT TO OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH MAKING CLEAR THAT DECISIONS AT UNCTAD IV WOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO IP. AGREEMENT WAS ALSO OBTAINED THAT NEITHER G-77 NOR GROUP B WORKING PAPERS WOULD BE APPENDED TO CC REPORT.

3. G-77 STATEMENT AT CLOSING PLENARY, WHILE ON THE WHOLE RELATIVELY MILD, SAID GROUP B WORKING PAPER WAS QUOTE STEP BACKWARD UNQUOTE, NOTING THAT IT AVOIDED ANY MENTION OF IP OR COMMON FUND, DEALT PRIMARILY WITH DEVELOPED COUNTRY INTERESTS, AND IGNORED NEED TO IMPROVE LDC TERMS OF TRADE. STATEMENT NOTED NONETHELESS THAT G-77 WAS WILLING TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE IN A COOPERATIVE SPIRIT AND THAT NEXT STAGE SHOULD INVOLVE NEGOTIATIONS AND ACTION.

4. GROUP B DELAYED START OF FINAL PLENARY BY OVER TWO HOURS WHILE TRYING TO CONVINCE THE NETHERLANDS TO ACCEPT A COMMON GROUP B STATEMENT LIMITED TO PROCEDURAL MATTERS. DUTCH INSISTED ON A MORE FORTHCOMING STATEMENT THAT WOULD HAVE REFERRED TO COMMON FUND AND TO ISSUE OF FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMODITY ARRANGEMENTS. SUPPORTED BY US AND ALL OTHER GROUP B DELEGATIONS EXCEPT DUTCH, GROUP B COORDINATOR (CUTTAT-SWITZERLAND) DECIDED TO DELIVER PROCEDURAL STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF GROUP B AND LEFT IT TO EACH DELEGATION TO DECIDE ITS OWN COURSE OF ACTION. AT THE LAST MINUTE, IN ORDER TO AVOID A SEPARATE INTERVENTION BY THE DUTCH, THE EC DELIVERED A STATEMENT CONTAINING REFERENCES TO A JUST WORLD ORDER, 7TH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNGASS RESOLUTION AND STOCK FINANCING ISSUES BUT WHICH ON THE WHOLE WAS EQUIVOCAL AND INNOCUOUS. IN VIEW OF BLAND EC STATEMENT, AND HOPE OF AVERTING SUCCESSION OF INDIVIDUAL STATEMENTS BY OTHER GROUP B MEMBERS, US AT LAST MOMENT REFRAINED FROM MAKING OWN SEPARATE INTERVENTION. NORDIC COUNTRIES AND JAPAN ALSO REMAINED SILENT, THOUGH THEY TOO HAD PREPARED STATEMENTS.

5. CHAIRMAN CHADHA CLOSED WITH CONCILIATORY AND RELATIVELY BALANCED STATEMENT. WHILE EXPRESSING SOME DISAPPOINTMENT AT LACK OF PROGRESS AT THIS SESSION, HE NOTED THAT WORKING PAPERS BY G-77 AND GROUP B AS WELL AS AGREED RESOLUTION REPRESENTED FORWARD STEP IDENTIFYING AREAS REQUIRING DECISIONS AND RECOGNIZING THAT TECHNICAL WORK BY SECRETARIAT WAS ESSENTIALLY COMPLETE. CHADHA AGREED WITH GROUP B STATEMENT THAT EXPECTATIONS OF OBTAINING AGREED CONCLUSIONS AT THIS MEETING WOULD HAVE BEEN UNREALISTIC, BUT HE HOPED CONTINUATION OF DIALOGUE WOULD ALLOW GOVERNMENTS TO MAKE POLITICAL DECISIONS REQUIRED FOR UNCTAD IV.

6. COMMENT: FROM US PERSPECTIVE, MOST IMPORTANT RESULT OF CC MEETING WAS INTENSE TWO-WEEK DISCUSSION WITHIN GROUP B AIMED AT WORKING OUT COMMON POSITION ON COMMODITY POLICY TOWARD LDCS. WHILE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS WAS MADE IN OBTAINING AGREEMENT ON OBJECTIVES AND TECHNIQUES (SEE REFTEL), THIS EXERCISE EMPHASIZES NEED TO REACH A COMMON GROUP B POSITION PRIOR TO MARCH TDB PREPARATORY MEETING FOR UNCTAD IV. HOWEVER, INABILITY OF GROUP B COUNTRIES TO AGREE ON OBJECTIVES ON SUPPLY AND MARKET ACCESS POSES SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR GROUP B IN MAINTAINING UNITED FRONT IN UNCTAD DEBATES. AS A RESULT, WE EXPECT A NUMBER OF GROUP B DELEGATIONS TO URGE THEIR OWN GOVERNMENTS TO RAISE THIS ISSUE-- PROBABLY AT THE OECD HIGH LEVEL GROUP ON COMMODITIES-- IN ORDER TO SPELL OUT SUPPLY AND MARKET ACCESS OBJECTIVES IN AN UNCTAD COMMODITY CONTEXT WITHOUT COMPROMISING THEIR POSITIONS IN THE MTN.

7. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A NOTABLE ABSENCE OF HARSH RHETORIC AND CONFRONTATION AT THIS MEETING, THIS MAY BE DUE TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LARGE EXTENT TO FACT THAT ASIANS AND LATIN AMERICANS HAVE NOT YET HAD MINISTERIAL PREPCON FOR G-77 MINISTERIAL AT MANILA. DIFFERING DEGREES OF ATTACHMENT TO INTEGRATED PROGRAM AMONG G-77 COUNTRIES AS WELL AS UNCERTAINTY OVER SIGNIFICANCE OF CIEC FOR LDC INTERESTS MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN FACTORS. STATEMENTS AT CLOSING PLENARY BY CHAIRMAN AND G-77 SUGGEST THAT-- GIVEN LACK OF FORWARD MOVEMENT ON IP AT THIS MEETING-- G-77 WILL PRESS HARD FOR POLITICAL-LEVEL DIALOGUE AT UNCTAD IV. DALE

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